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RIDING OFF.

This is a phrase well known among the members of the House of Commons, who use it to describe the circumstance of an individual or party of individuals taking advantage of some flaw or weak point in propositions to which they are not very well disposed, in order, with a good grace, to abandon all consideration of them. In that house a strongly practical air must be thrown around every thing for which the least attention is expected; let the proposer give but the least hint at a principle which cannot in the mean time be carried into effect, and nearly the whole house will be found to *ride off* upon it. The phrase is highly picturesque, and we never hear it without conceiving of that grave assembly as of a dignified cavalcade proceeding in ordinary circumstances quietly along, till, as it happens, some one is pleased to say that there ought to be pleasure-grounds in connection with every large town in the empire, when suddenly bridles are heard to ring and steeds to champ, and, in the next moment, all except perhaps two or three are seen scampering off at various angles, as if pestilence or something worse lay in the straight line. Perhaps there is always so much more than enough of what is practicable under the attention of Parliament, that it is too much to expect it to put off time with what is not likely to come to pass for a dozen years; but, whatever be the occasion, there is the phrase. It is not our duty to praise or blame those overtaken gentlemen: what we have to do is to give a few general remarks upon *riding off*, as practised every day in ordinary discourse.

Yes—*riding off* is by no means confined to the house in which the phrase originated. We have been plagued with *riding off*, ever since we could speak or listen. It is a favourite expedient among high and low, young and old, rich and poor. Children *ride off* before they can well walk. "John, you were a very naughty boy to overturn the lamp in nurse's lap, by which you spoiled her new red gown." So says mamma to a little fellow who has hitherto stood mute under the sense of guilt. "Mamma, it was nurse's brown gown, and not her red one," instantly exclaims John, in the manner of one who imagines himself unjustly accused, and who has facts to appeal to for his innocence. "Betty, you remained out too late last night. I gave you leave till nine, and I am informed you did not come home till ten. Since you thus take undue advantage of my kindness, I will not be so ready to grant you leave again." So says mistress to servant. "Well, I declare, ma'am, you are quite wrong. It wanted fully five minutes of ten when I came in. If any one said it was ten, he told —" and so forth. And so Betty *rides off* upon the speciality of the five minutes. No matter how small a fraction of exculpation, or how flimsy a shadow of excuse, can be presented against the charge brought forward, it always helps a little to stagger the accuser, and to make a show of defence in the eyes of a third party. The principle is fully acknowledged, indeed, even in the law, for, if a rogue can prove a misspelt word in his indictment, he may be as clearly guilty as possible, and yet, upon the strength of that counter trespass upon Walker's Sheridan, he will get off.

There is much of both unphilosophical and immoral equestrianism of this kind. If you lay before some people arguments which they are unable to comprehend, they will perhaps listen to a certain extent through politeness, without taking in or endeavouring to take in a single idea, till you stumble upon something slightly at variance with generally received notions; when, all at once, shaking up themselves and their steeds out of a profound reverie, off they gallop. Such slips are very apt to occur in oral discourse and

argument; and it really seems very hard that, after you have preached sound and irrefragable sense for half an hour, the error of a moment should deprive you of all advantage from it, and drown the whole discussion, as it often does, in a gabble of ridicule and nonsense. The truth of almost every thing lies in a medium. In your views upon any particular subject, you may keep by that medium with the greatest equability, and thus, in the estimation of every unprejudiced person, manifest the justest and most perfect good sense. But nearly every thing has also its vicious extremes and its abuses, and how easy is it to mar the effect of all that has been said, by an allusion to one of these! For instance, you may be arguing for music, as an amusement not more unfailing, than it is, in a proper degree, innocent; when, in an instant, you are overthrown by an allusion to the fantastic enthusiasm occasionally manifested by amateur musicians. It is bad when this result takes place through pure want of philosophical habits of thinking on the part of your opponent, but it is much worse when you are prostrated by one who errs through design. There is a set of dishonest thinkers and reasoners, who cunningly evade the general weight of an argument, and only exert themselves when their opponent has made a somewhat rash assertion, or advanced a hypothesis which clashes a little with existing prejudices. They will allow as much of the wind of sound logic to pass, as might have sufficed to blow them twenty times out of the water; they will—to use an appropriate proverbial phrase—*jouk* to a whole tide of convincing discourse; when, let but a single puff of the breeze or a spark of the foam afford matter for exception or reproach, and there do the dastards take up their ground of opposition. They may be unable to find a single fault in the thing itself; but it would be a wonderful thing which could not be connected or associated with something not so pure. The slightest hint, the most oblique reference, the mere suggestion of the association, is enough, with the class of equestrians which we are describing, to enable them, in their own conceit, and that of perhaps a great proportion of indifferent bystanders, to turn the tables upon unsunned snow itself.

The success of tangential equestrianism depends much on the effect which the objection or exception has in disconcerting the opposite party. And, sometimes, the very futility of the objection, its miserable smallness, occasions more perplexity than would a sound argument, for the very sense of the absurdity of giving it the importance inferred by a reply, is confounding. In such circumstances, we conceive that it is much to be desired that a ready means of retorting the ridicule should be in possession of the injured party. Such a means appears to be afforded by the use of the phrase *riding off*. Let the philosophical absurdity of *riding off* be in the first place generally understood. Let its meanness and dishonesty as a controversial trick be in like manner known to mankind. The phrase then becomes a talisman, to awaken, in an instant, in all companies, a full sense of the weakness and vileness of the practice. Were it thus introduced into general use, the certainty of being met by the exclamation "*riding off!*" would, if we are not greatly mistaken, keep many silly and many unconscientious people silent.

While we are upon this subject, we cannot omit the opportunity of further adverting to the bad logic which is invariably found among the less educated classes of society. The cause of much error of opinion is to be found in that careless and indolent habit of mind, which easily admits the truth of any proposition, without being at the trouble of examining it, or of verifying it by a

reference to facts. Many are disposed to admit as true whatever is confidently asserted; and if it appear under the solemn and imposing sanction of print, to express any doubt or misgiving regarding it, would be thought in the utmost degree unreasonable. It is thus that errors exercising an evil influence over the condition of the uneducated, and calculated to obstruct their progress in the path of improvement, hold a despotic sway over the mind; and their reign is perpetuated through the influence of that submissive obedience which so many blindly render to them, without venturing to contradict their truth, or question their authority.

There are other errors which, through mere popular currency, acquire all the stability of the most fixed and valuable truths. They are like forged bank notes which have contracted the soiled and tattered appearance of a long-continued circulation, and which pass as genuine with each successive dupe, because he does not take the trouble to examine them. There is this difference, however, between the receiver of the false bank note and the receiver of the false opinion, that the former passes the counterfeit as genuine, never discovers his mistake, and suffers no loss; whereas the latter probably suffers material injury from the adoption of an error, and is the means of transmitting the error and the injury to others. Among the less educated classes, there are many such errors afloat, which it would be no easy matter to expose to detection. They who indulge them are not distinguished for careful or accurate reflection, and they readily adopt without inquiry whatever opinions are current among those with whom they have daily intercourse. They are practically much disposed to be misled by the logical sophism of *assigning that as the cause which is not the cause*; and sometimes, by an apparent correctness and ingenuity of reasoning, they arrive at the most erroneous conclusions. In the ordinary matter of attention to their own health, the fallacy just named has a fatal influence. We have known individuals so uninstructed, and so perverted in their opinions, as to believe that a want of cleanliness, if not conducive to health, was at least not detrimental to it. There is, indeed, a proverb pretty common among the poorer classes in Scotland, which is rather unsavoury for our pages, but which most graphically expresses that there is a close connection between nastiness and good fortune. It is remarked that, among certain classes of the poor, the children are all strong, notwithstanding the rough treatment they undergo. The reason is obvious, that, among them, even as among savages, the weak ones all die. Speak to a person of this class of attention to health, and he will exclaim, "There's nane sae unhealthy as them that are aye takin' care," and he will moreover proceed to support the truth of his opinion by numerous proofs, perhaps concluding with the case of "auld James Tamson, that never took ony care o' himsel' a' his days, an' he's now gaun in his seventy-ninth year, living and life-like." It never occurs to our logician that James has lived to this great age, not in consequence of his carelessness, but in spite of it; and that the treatment which he has miraculously survived has had the effect of carrying off thousands to untimely graves, by all the diversities of unnamed diseases common among the poor—"sair sitten down cauld," "clochers o' hoasts," "an unco breathlessness," &c. almost all the result of their own carelessness.

The same mode of perverted reasoning leads to a very gross and prejudicial error in regard to habits of temperance. We had occasion once to offer advice to a young man in a humble walk of life on this subject, and as he urged that the severe nature of his employ-

ment rendered additional nourishment necessary, we endeavoured to persuade him that there was no nourishment whatever in ardent spirits. His reply was, "I dinna like, air, to say you're lecin'; but—nourishment!—I've heard my mither say fifty times that a glass o' whisky was just a perfect medicine." Nothing is more common than to argue, perhaps from a single and extraordinary case, that intemperate habits are not very prejudicial to health; or, if few will be found to express such a sentiment directly in words, many suffer it to have indirectly a most pernicious power over their minds. To be able to adduce one case where intemperance did not injure the health, seems to countervail the thousands of cases where it was most plainly the cause of death. We remember an aged bottle veteran who survived the worst treatment that the human constitution perhaps ever endured, and who attained to the advanced age of ninety-two. This toper was indirectly the cause of intemperate habits in many, who sank into their graves while he continued his libations. When the question came to be discussed, whether drunkenness was really very hurtful to the health, the conclusion arrived at was couched in some such overwhelming question as this: "Iana there auld Johnny Reddie, near ninety, that's been drinkin' hard this fifty year and mair, an' is as hale as the best o' us?" This was irresistible. "Johnny" had indulged the practice for upwards of half a century; therefore the practice could not be hurtful. It was curious that no one thought of mentioning the vast numbers, who, by their pernicious habits, had literally killed themselves; and that it never occurred to the sapient reasoners that this extraordinary individual had survived half a century's drunkenness, not in consequence of it, but in spite of it.

The same perversion of opinion is observable in numberless other instances. How much would society gain in comfort and happiness, could these errors be generally shown to be false! And how much misery might be avoided, were men less under the influence of opinions which have nothing to recommend them to belief but general currency!

WEALTH AND FASHION, AN AMERICAN STORY.*

"WHAT a pity it is," said Caroline, throwing aside her book, "we are born under a republican government!"

"Upon my word," said her brother Horace, "that is a patriotic observation for an American."

"Oh, I know," replied the sister, "that it is not a popular one; we must all join in the cry of liberty and equality; but for my part, I am tired of it, and I am determined to say what I think. I hate republicanism; I hate liberty and equality; and I don't hesitate to declare, that I am for a monarchy. You may laugh, but I would say it at the stake." "Bravo!" exclaimed Horace; "why, you have almost run yourself out of breath, Cara; you deserve to be prime minister to the king." "You mistake me," replied she, with dignity. "I have no wish to mingle in political broils; but I must say, I think our equality is odious. What do you think? To-day, the new chamber-maid put her head in at the door, and said, 'Caroline, your mamma wants you.'"

"Excellent!" said Horace, clapping his hands and laughing. "I suppose, if ours were a monarchical government, she would have bent one knee to the ground, or saluted your little foot, before she spoke." "No, Horace, you know there are no such forms as those, except in the papal dominions."

"May I ask, then, your highness, what you would like to be?" "I should like," said she, glancing at the glass, "I should like to be a countess." "You are moderate in your ambition; a countess, now-a-days, is the fag end of nobility." "Oh! but it sounds so delightfully. . . . The young Countess Caroline!" "If sound is all, you shall have that pleasure; we will call you the young Countess Caroline." "That would be mere burlesque, Horace, and would make me ridiculous." "True," replied Horace; "nothing can be more inconsistent for us than aiming at titles." "For us, I grant you," replied Caroline; "but if they were hereditary, if we had been born to them, if they came to us through belted knights and high-born dames, then we might be proud to wear them. I never shall cease to regret that I was not born under a monarchy." "You seem to forget," said Horace, "that all are not lords and ladies in the royal dominions. Suppose your first squawk, as you call it, should have been among the plebeians." "You may easily suppose, Horace, that I did not mean to take those chances. No, I meant to be born among the higher ranks." "Your own reason must tell you

that all cannot be born among the higher ranks, for then the lower ones would be wanting, which constitute the comparison. Now, Caroline, we come to the very point. Is it not better to be born under a government, in which there is neither extreme of high or low; where one man cannot be raised pre-eminently over another; and where our nobility consists of talent and virtue." "That sounds very patriotic, brother," said Caroline, with a laugh; "but I am inclined to think that wealth constitutes our nobility, and the right of abusing each other, our liberty."

"You mistake," returned Horace; "money may buy a temporary power, but talent is power itself; and when united to virtue, a God-like power, one before which the mere man of millions quails. No; give me talent, health, and unwavering principle, and I will not ask for wealth, but I will carve my own way; and depend upon it, wealth will be honourably mine."

"Well, Horace, I am sure I heartily wish you the possession of all together, talent, principle, and wealth. But depend upon it, the time is not distant, when you shall see me in possession of all the rank that any one can obtain in our plebeian country."

Such were the sentiments of the brother and sister; both perhaps unusually endowed with talent. Horace had just received his diploma as attorney at law, Caroline had entered her eighteenth year, and was a belle in her own circle, with the ideas we describe.

Mr and Mrs Warner had given birth to a forest of little twigs, and certainly had tried to bend them all one way, that is, to make them virtuous and contented. But, under the same gentle discipline, nothing could be more different than the dispositions of the two eldest girls, Caroline and Fanny. Mrs Warner was a plain unassuming woman, with no higher ambition than her means afforded. Some sacrifices had been made to send their eldest son Horace to college, with the belief, that, to give him a good education, was qualifying him to assist in the advancement of his brothers. He had as yet fully realised their expectations. He had not thought it necessary, while at college, to engage in any rebellion to prove his spirit and independence, but had trod the path of duty with undeviating step, had had one of the first parts awarded to him, and received an honourable degree, instead of being suspended or expelled. He had prosecuted his professional studies with diligence, and was now known as attorney at law.

Frances, or Fanny, as she was familiarly called, relieved her mother from many of her domestic cares; the other children were still too young to bear much part in the busy scenes of life.

Among Horace's college friends, was a young man of the name of Benson. He had there been his companion, and was now his partner in business. They occupied the same office, and were bound together by the strongest ties of friendship. His association had hitherto been chiefly confined to the young men. In answer to Horace's commendations of his friend, Caroline constantly replied, "He may be all you say, but nobody knows him; he is in no society." When she met him, however, at a splendid ball, given by one who stood first in his profession, her heart became a little softened towards him, and in issuing invitations for a party, one was sent to Mr Benson. To her astonishment, an answer was returned "declining the honour." "I am very glad," said Caroline, a little piqued; "it would have been an awkward thing; he does not visit in our circle." "No," replied Horace, "he does not, at present, visit in any circle; he is devoted to business." "How I detest a drone!" said she, pettishly. "If you mean to apply that epithet to my friend, you are greatly mistaken." "True, I ought to have said a drudge." "Yes," said Horace, "we brother lawyers, who ever hope to attain any eminence, are all drudges."

Not long after, Caroline again met Benson in a circle which she considered fashionable. She had no longer any objection to admitting him to her society, and even exerted herself to appear amiable and charming. "You certainly did not overrate your friend," said she one day to her brother; "he is one of the most agreeable men I ever met with. I wish he was a more fashionable man." "I don't know what you mean," said Horace; "he certainly dresses remarkably well." "His dress is well enough; I don't mean that." "His manners are easy, and those of a gentleman." "Yes, all that is very well; but I mean, that I wish it was the fashion to invite and notice him."

By degrees, Caroline ceased to cavil at Mr Benson's standing in society. She had talent enough to appreciate him, and all her powers of captivation were exerted to ensnare him. What does a man devoted to business know of female character? He was entirely satisfied that Miss Warner was "perfect and peerless, and made of every creature's best." In a very few months he was completely in love, and at the end of another had offered himself. Caroline consulted her brother. His encomiums as usual were warm. "I know Benson perfectly," said he; "he is a man of honourable principle and first-rate talent." "Do you think he will ever be rich?" asked Caroline. "I think he is too fine a fellow," said Horace, with feeling, "to be sacrificed to a woman whose first question is 'Will he ever be rich?'" "Let us understand each other," said Caroline; "I like Benson—I even prefer him to any one I know. You say I am ambitious—I admit it is so; then my object must be to marry ambitiously. There is no sin in this; and I never will marry any man that is not distinguished, or able to make himself so. If Benson were rich, I

should not hesitate; if I were sure he would be rich, I should hesitate no longer, because with wealth he could command any rank in society."

"I do not enter into these cold calculations," returned Horace; "if ever I fall in love, it will be with a woman whose heart and not whose head is at work. However, you ask the question, and I will answer it. I do think that, in time, he will not only be rich, but be one of our most distinguished men." It is difficult to say how much this opinion influenced the young calculator, but her answer was by no means such as to throw Benson into despair. In a short time he was the acknowledged lover of Caroline, with the full and free consent of her parents, the warm-hearted approbation of her brother, and the silent though feeling acquiescence of her sister.

Might it not seem that in such an union there were materials enough for happiness? But when is ambition satisfied? Benson was neither rich, nor a man of fashion; and after the first excitement of being engaged was over, Caroline grew listless and languid. Sometimes she was vexed that he did not devote his time to her, rather than to his profession; and sometimes she secretly murmured at her own rashness in forming an engagement upon such an uncertain basis, and was ready to mourn that beauty and talents like hers should be doomed to such an unworthy lot. For a long time Benson was too entirely shielded by the uprightness of his own mind to suspect the tumult of her thoughts. Gradually, however, unpleasant reflections forced themselves upon him; he even suspected there might be something a little worldly in her character; but if so, what a proof she had given him of her attachment! She had taken him without fortune, and was willing to wait till a competence could be acquired.

One year passed away, and the winter of the second arrived. Caroline's discontent seemed to increase; she became even fretful at times, but there was a dignity and elevation in Benson's character which always checked the first ebullitions of spleen, and he saw much less of it than her own family. Horace became seriously alarmed; he feared that he might have made his friends, as well as his sister's future misery, in promoting a match that he began to think was not suited to either. At this crisis Caroline received an invitation to pass a few weeks with a relation at New York. Horace warmly seconded her wish to accept it, for he considered that her affection wanted such a test. A pleasant party of friends were going on, and the lovers parted with mutual protestations of fidelity. A short residence with her cousins the Ellisons convinced her they were among the refined, and stood on the very pinnacle of fashion.

We trust our readers have already discovered that Caroline had a reflecting mind. She immediately began to investigate and analyse the causes of their exaltation. In the first place, it was not beauty; for Mrs Ellison, without her French hat, blond veil, and diamond ear-rings, was almost plain. It certainly could not be high birth; for "her parents were nobody." The conclusion was obvious: it was her wealth, her elegant house, her stylish parties, and superb carriage. Here, then, she concluded, she had found the principle of American aristocracy; and with this conviction came all the horrors of her own lot—at the best, a competency with Benson!

One morning Caroline went to an auction with Mrs Ellison; fashionable ladies in New York condescend to buy bargains, as well as in London. She was struck with the amount and magnitude of her purchases. "Have you no fear," said Caroline, as they were returning home, "that Mr Ellison will think you extravagant?" "It is nothing to him," said the lady; "I buy all out of my own allowance." "Is it possible," said Caroline, "that you have regular pin money?" "You may call it pin money if you please," said Mrs Ellison. "I have a stated sum for my own expenses; I should be perfectly wretched if I had to go to Mr Ellison for every farthing I wanted to spend; never marry without such a stipulation." Caroline thought of Benson; the recollection of him came over her like an east wind, and she turned blue and cold.

At first, Caroline was noticed as Mrs Ellison's friend, but her beauty soon attracted observation, and she quickly caught whatever was stylish in those with whom she associated. People ceased to inquire whether she was "any body." Many a distinguished lady of fashion, whose name had hitherto met her ear in faint echoes, now left her card for Miss Warner, and solicited her company at her soirées. "Oh!" thought Caroline, "if ever the time arrives when I can give soirées!" and again the image of Benson came over her, and again she turned blue and cold. It may be easily supposed, under such circumstances, that she strove to banish him from her mind; she ceased to write home, and hardly deigned to answer the letters she received.

"Miss Warner," said Mr Ellison, one morning at the breakfast table, "I have a special embassy to you. Mr Burrell called on me yesterday, and after the warmest encomiums on Miss Warner's beauty, wit, and sweetness, asked me if she was disengaged. I told him I presumed so. Am I right?" Caroline coloured, but gave an assenting bow. "What was the meaning of that report I heard about you being engaged?" asked Mrs Ellison, as Caroline thought, very ill-naturedly. "I am not answerable for reports," replied she, blushing still deeper. "Never mind, Miss Warner," said the gentleman; "married

* We quote this story from "THE TOKEN, for 1836," an American annual (Boston: Bowen, 1836) exhibiting a number of beautifully executed pictorial embellishments, and, as far as literature is concerned, considerably superior to the majority of annuals published in this country.

ladies always think the right of flirtation belongs exclusively to themselves. Mr Burrell requests permission to call on you this evening, and that you will have the goodness to see him alone. The truth is, he means to offer himself, and you must be prepared with an answer." "Mr Burrell!" exclaimed she, with affected astonishment; "he is old enough to be my father." "Your grandfather, I should think," said the gentleman. "No matter," said Mrs Ellison; "he is exceedingly rich." "Is he thought a man of fashion?" asked Caroline. "Whoever becomes Mrs Burrell," said Mr Ellison, "will have the most splendid house, carriages, furniture, et cetera, in the city; she will have every thing but a young and agreeable husband." "Is he thought liberal?" said Caroline. "That is not his general character, but probably a young wife will make him so."

Evening found Caroline equipped for the interview. Mr Burrell came at the appointed hour. Notwithstanding his peruke, whiskers, and teeth, were of the best workmanship, the man of sixty stood revealed. His manner of making love certainly did not disgrace his years, as it was quite in the old-fashioned style; he called her "his lovely girl, his adorable charmer." She, in return, was all artlessness, and acknowledged that he had interested her from the first moment of her introduction. She did not think it necessary to add, that she had previously heard of his overflowing coffers.

That evening would have decided the fate of Caroline, had she not determined to stipulate for pin money. Though titles could not be introduced into America, she saw no reason why this excellent English custom should not be adopted; she therefore, after whispering the yielding state of her mind, begged him to wait for a more decisive answer, till she had written to her dear parents.

The next day Caroline dispatched a letter to her brother, full of ambiguities, but sufficient to alarm her friends. In a short time she received a letter in reply from Horace. "There is one sentence in your letter left unfinished (said he), which fills me with apprehension. You say, 'I am over head and ears in —' and then break off, as if unwilling to proceed. You cannot mean over head and ears in love, for you are no hypocrite; can it be in debt? If you have thoughtlessly involved yourself in expense, do not let it have any influence in forming this connection. I promise you that you shall be extricated from all embarrassment, without its being known; I know that I have more than sufficient for the purpose. Write to me openly and fearlessly; it is not too late to retract."

Such was the purport of the letter. Caroline shed a few natural tears as she folded it up. Horace had discovered one part of the truth; she was in debt, far beyond her means to discharge. It was utterly impossible that she should dress in the style of Mrs Ellison, with her limited means, without running in debt. There were bills at the dressmakers, milliners, and jewellers. Since her engagement, these were unimportant; they were all ready to wait till she returned Mrs Burrell. Her lover wished to accompany her home, but some remains of feeling prevented her accepting his offer. She was received by her family with unchanged affection. It had been a general agreement, that Benson should not visit there till after Caroline's marriage and departure. She was by that means saved from the mortification of meeting him.

When Horace first communicated to him the purport of Caroline's letter, he received the intelligence with strong emotion; in a short time, however, he grew collected and calm. "There is more," said he, "to mortify my self-love in this affair, than my affection. I have felt almost from the first that we were neither of us satisfied with each other. Often have I sought refuge with Fanny, when wearied with the caprices of her sister, and I candidly acknowledge that I have sometimes wished my good genius had directed me to her in the first place." "My dear fellow," said Horace, squeezing his hand, "let us drop this subject entirely; when Caroline goes to New York, you will visit us as usual."

A new scene was now enacting in the quiet mansion of Mr Warner. He had made his daughter a present sufficient to amply furnish her wardrobe; beyond that was not in his power. Her apartment was crowded with silks, satins, shawls, and French flowers; not a chair nor a table but was loaded with articles of this nature. It was a season of triumph for Caroline; never before had she indulged the exuberance of her really elegant taste, not even on her late visit at New York, where her debts remained unpaid. Once or twice it occurred to her that she would reserve a few hundreds to discharge them; but when is vanity satisfied? There was still something more to purchase, and the whole was soon appropriated.

Frances looked on with a feeling of wonder and regret; there was much in the whole affair she could not comprehend. She felt impatient to behold the man who could rival Benson, and she once expressed the feeling to her sister. Caroline laughed scornfully; there was no hypocrisy in her character. Had this trait arisen from principle, it might have been a redeeming point; but it rather proceeded from want of feeling: she could not comprehend that what was immaterial to her, would shock others.

"Do you really think, Fanny," said she, "that I am going to marry Burrell for his beauty or his talents? No, my sweet one, it is for his goods and chattels."

"I do not at present envy you any thing you are to possess," said Fanny, quietly; "of all misery I can imagine, the greatest is giving the hand without the heart. But may I ask, are you going to purchase diamonds?"

"I purchase diamonds! Why, you dear innocent soul, my father's whole income would not buy me a pair of diamond ear-rings! No, Burrell desired that he might furnish my bridal jewels; of course, they will be diamonds. Mrs Ellison's are superb, but mine will undoubtedly be more so; Burrell's income is much larger than Ellison's. He has not made me a present worth speaking of since we were engaged, and I have no doubt he means to put all his strength into my diamonds. I perceive you do not enter into my splendid prospects. I forgive you; it is human nature. Never mind, Fanny; when I get settled, I will send for you, and you will have much greater advantages for making a match than I had." "I thank you; but I am sure diamonds would not add to my happiness." "You think so now, because you know nothing of their importance in the world." "I hope I never shall know." "You are deceiving yourself, if you suppose all this indifference arises from principle. It is ignorance, pure ignorance."

At length Mr Burrell arrived; his equipage was splendid. He told Caroline, "her house wanted only its lovely mistress to render it complete." In the eyes of Horace and Fanny, he was any thing but attractive; but the one most interested, seemed perfectly satisfied. The wedding evening arrived, and still no jewels had been presented. Caroline arrayed herself in her bridal dress, and arranged her hair for the splendid tiara of diamonds, which was to far surpass Mrs Ellison's. Radiant in smiles, she descended to the parlour, to meet her lover tête-à-tête, before the hour appointed for the ceremony arrived. He was the most admiring, the most enraptured of men; and thanking his fair mistress for her attention to his request in permitting him to furnish her wedding jewels, placed a package in her hand. She only waited to express her thanks, and flew to her room to examine and adorn herself with her treasures. She found Fanny quietly folding up her dresses and putting the apartment in order. "They have come! I have got them!" she exclaimed; "give me a pair of scissors, a knife, any thing," and she began pulling upon the knot with her slender fingers, and white teeth. At length the package was unfastened, and the little red morocco case appeared before her; for a moment she hesitated, then hastily opened it; it fell from her hand, and she threw herself back, as if in the act of fainting. Frances flew to assist her. "Stand off!" exclaimed Caroline; "I want breath." The struggle was for a moment doubtful, but happily a burst of tears relieved her. It was long and violent, but at length her words found utterance. "A wretch! a monster! an old superannuated fool! it is not too late yet," and she began to tear off the orange blossoms from her glossy ringlets.

"You are distracted," said her sister; "what does all this mean?" "Look!" she exclaimed, spurning with her white satin shoe, the case that lay on the carpet. Fanny picked it up; it contained a pair of pearl ear-rings and a pin, neither remarkable for their richness or beauty. "They are very pretty," said Fanny; "shall I put them into your ears?" Another burst of tears followed. "You will render yourself unfit to be seen; and what will Mr Burrell think!" "I care not what he thinks." Violent passion soon relieves itself. Caroline began to reflect upon his house, his equipage, his fashion and wealth, and grew calmer; but with a tact for which she was remarkable, she determined to wear no ear-rings that evening. Composing her countenance, and again arranging her orange blossoms, she descended to the admiring bridegroom. "It is all in vain," said she, "to try; I cannot wear the ear-rings; I must have my ears prepared for them." Her flushed cheeks and swollen eyes bore testimony to the pain she had suffered in trying to force them through her ears. Her lover assured her she wanted no ornament in his eyes, and that he had never fancied ear-rings. "There is a style of dress, however," said Caroline, "that is consistent with one's rank in life. I hope I shall always dress in such a manner as to do you honour." "Sweet creature!" exclaimed the bridegroom, kissing her hand.

Caroline turned away with disgust, and sad misgivings came over her. In one hour the ceremony had passed, and bridal visitors began to throng. Perhaps, among them all, there was not one less happy than the beautiful bride; the two great objects for which she had as yet been toiling were still unaccomplished, pin money and diamonds.

The next morning at ten, the equipage was at the door; the bride took leave of her family, and was handed into her carriage by the bridegroom; the coach, with its four bays and out-rider, disappeared, like Cinderella's equipage, and all at Mr Warner's returned to its usual state of domestic quiet. It is said by some sensible person, that we become more acquainted with people in three days' travel, than a year's stationary residence. The first day, the new married couple were very conversable. The bridegroom described his house and furniture, told how much he gave for every article, and they rolled smoothly on. The second day's conversation flagged a little. Caroline began to complain of being "shut up," said how tedious it was to journey, and at last proposed letting down the green shades, which had been closed at the

express desire of the gentleman, who was much troubled with an inflammation in his eyes. "Certainly, my love, if you desire it," said he, but without making any movement to assist her efforts. After some time she accomplished her purpose, let down the shade and the window, and, putting her head out, declared "it was delightful to breathe the fresh air." "Oh, not the window, my love," said Mr Burrell, gently drawing her towards him, and pulling it up. "I cannot permit you to endanger your precious health; the air is very cold; you don't consider it is the third of November," and he wrapped his wadded silk coat round him. "I am not the least afraid of taking cold," said she; "I must have it down. I shall die to ride so shut up." "To be honest," replied he, "if you are not afraid, I am." "Oh, that is quite another affair," said Caroline; "I suppose I have nothing to do but obey."

It seemed as if the bridegroom thought the same, for in a few moments he said, "this light is insupportable," and he drew up the shade. "Good gracious!" exclaimed the bride, "am I to ride all day to-day shut up, as I was yesterday?" "Perhaps you will take a little nap, my love; I always sleep a great deal when I ride." "I am not so fortunate," returned she. "Every thing depends upon the carriage in which you travel. I had this built on purpose for my comfort." "So it seems," replied Caroline. "It is finished in the most thorough manner; it cost nearly three thousand dollars; my horses cost twenty-five hundred more; there is not, perhaps, a handsomer team in New York. You travelled in a very different style from this when you went on and returned last fall, and this spring." "Very different," said Caroline, and she thought of the gay and animated party in the stage-coach, and the pleasant variety on board the steam-boat; and, notwithstanding the style in which she was travelling, heartily wished she could exchange the mode.

"Pray try to get a little nap, my love; nothing shortens the way like sleep," and the bridegroom drew from one of the pockets of the carriage a travelling cap, took off his hat, put on the cap, and leant back. In a very short time he gave evident signs of being asleep. Nothing could have been less interesting to a young bride than her present contemplations. There is a relaxation of the muscles in sleep, by no means favourable to age; the falling under lip, the strongly marked lines of the countenance, the drooping corners of the mouth, the imminent risk of losing his balance, first on one side, then on the other; the danger, too, that Caroline's French hair incurred, by his sudden inclinations towards her; all this was not calculated to improve the already ruffled temper of the young lady.

"And I am to pass my life with this being!" thought she. "Were Benson in his place, how animated, how pleasant would be his conversation! After all, there is nothing like mind; nothing, at least, but wealth and fashion. Thank heaven! I have secured these, and these will command every thing. I wish this may be the last journey we shall take together."

Let us pass over the remainder of this odious journey, and behold Caroline in her new abode.

Her vain but penurious husband bought for her—but only as a loan—a brilliant set of diamonds, with which she appeared at one of her earliest evening parties. The evening was one of triumph; all the fashion and beauty of the city were congregated. Caroline saw her diamonds reflected from mirrors on every side, but still the thought obtruded, "they are not mine." Invitations poured in; she was the evening and morning star of fashion. "At length," she wrote to Horace, "I have accomplished my object; all the rank that one can obtain in this country, I possess; I hold in my hand the keystone of the arch—Wealth and Fashion." Caroline, however, had too much intellect to be long blind to the degree of estimation in which she was held. She soon perceived that her husband was laughed at, and that she was pitied rather than envied. It was true she had all the outward signs of homage, but every thing about her was mockery. There is no tyranny like that of the weak. Burrell regarded her only as an appendage to himself; she found him selfish, ostentatious, and mean. In vain she strove to obtain the ultimatum of her desires, pin money. Like herself, he considered wealth power, and not a particle would he trust out of his hands; this was a source of constant altercation.

After the novelty of showing a handsome wife was over, Burrell began to feel the want of his bachelor habits; he liked whist-clubs and supper-parties better than soirées and pic-nics. The privation of his company was no annoyance to his wife; but when he no longer entered into her mode of visiting, or her amusements, he thought them unnecessary, and complained of so much useless expense. Every thing, in his view, was useless, except what contributed to his pleasure. Caroline had gone on accumulating debts, without looking forward to any payment. Those incurred before her marriage were still unsettled; the same trades-people were happy to supply her to any amount; and as a request for money always produced a scene, she acquired the constant habit of running up bills.

Where now were her brilliant prospects? She was either alone, or in a crowded circle, or what was still worse, along with Burrell. Among all the circle of fashion, she possessed not one real friend. Mrs Ellison was as heartless as Caroline, without her talents. Often her thoughts reverted to her own home, the

abode of her childhood, and she felt that in the depths and fulness of domestic love, there was even more power than wealth can bestow. In one of those fits of musing which occur to every rational mind, a letter was brought to Caroline; she opened it, and found it was from Horace, informing her "that the favourite wish of his heart was now accomplished; Benson was, after all that had passed, to become his brother, and that the day was appointed for the marriage to take place between him and Fanny."

"My predictions with regard to him," he added, "are fast fulfilling; he is attaining eminence in his profession. I am commissioned by my parents, as well as the parties, to request that you and Mr Burrell will come on to the nuptials. They are to be private, and without show; but it is pleasant for families to congregate on these occasions. You need have no apprehension about Benson; he views your former engagement with him much in the same light as you do, one most happily set aside." With what anguish was this letter perused!

There was still, however, a pleasure in the idea of going in style to the humble nuptials of her sister. When Mr Burrell entered, she informed him of the invitation. "Go, and welcome," said he, "but don't ask me." "Shall I travel with two horses or four?" asked the lady. "Oh, four by all means; the stage-coach is the best way of travelling." "You surely do not mean to let your wife go in the public stage?" "Why not?—it was the way in which you were accustomed to travel before we became acquainted." "Mr Burrell, it would be disgraceful to you to suffer me to travel in that manner." "Then stay at home; the carriage and horses, I suppose, you will allow are mine; I had the carriage built for my own convenience; I am going a journey next month, and shall want it. It is much better for you to go in the style of your family." "This is intolerable," said Caroline, with a vehemence that sometimes overcame her usual tact; "to be the wife of a man that is worth millions, and derive no advantage from his wealth." "Is it no advantage, madam, to live in a house like this, to visit in the first circles, and to wear diamonds when you please?" "None," said she, the truth forcing its way, "compared to what I relinquished." "And pray, madam, what did you relinquish?" "What you, had you lavished upon me all the wealth, to which, as your wife, I am entitled, could never have procured me—self-approbation!"

We sometimes from habit, or want of thought, rely too much upon the obtuseness of minds that we estimate lowly. This was the case with Caroline. She in several instances had suffered her disgust or indignation to vent itself in words, of which she did not realise the strength. The undisciplined prepare scorpion whips for themselves. Her ill-disguised contempt and aversion first broke down the common barriers of forbearance; and when her husband became convinced that she had no affection for him, he heartily repaid her aversion. Scenes of accusation and retort followed. Burrell assured her she had full permission to return to her boasted home, and remain there as long as she pleased. Caroline replied, that it was the first wish of her heart; but, as his wife, she was entitled to a suitable maintenance. It would be painful and useless to detail the low altercations that followed, before a paltry pittance was granted. It may easily be imagined in what manner they parted, and with what sensations she returned to her early home. In one sense she had accomplished all for which she had panted—wealth, fashion, and diamonds; and her present allowance she was at liberty to dignify by the name of pin money. The morning before her departure, she gave orders to a servant to desire her creditors to send in their bills to Mr Burrell the ensuing week. His rage may easily be imagined, when they poured in upon him; but after consulting gentlemen of the law, he concluded to pay them.

Caroline arrived in season to witness the nuptials of her sister. What a contrast to her own! For the first time, she felt, that, if there is a paradise on earth, it is formed by mutual affection. How could she help comparing Benson, in all the grace of youthful intellect and manly beauty, to Burrell! The thought was agony, and, unable to command her tears, she flew to her room. Horace followed her, and begged for admission. "My dear brother," said she, "I return to you an altered creature. I detest the very sound of wealth and fashion, and I perfectly despise my own folly in supposing there could be happiness in either. I only wish now to forget all that has passed, and I hope you will forget it too." "No, Caroline, I cannot forget it, nor do I wish you to forget the past. If we rightly remember our errors, they become eventually sources of improvement. An author has observed, 'that in every one's life there have been thousands of feelings, each of which, if strongly seized upon, and made the subject of reflection, would have shown us what our character was, and what it was likely to become.' In the early aspirations of your mind, you may read your history thus far; do not, therefore, strive to banish wholesome reflection, but convert it to its best purposes, moral discipline." "I am sure," said Caroline, "I have had enough of discipline since I married, and I don't see that I am at all the better for it."

"There is no magical power in discipline that compels us to improve," said Horace; "but it is our own fault if we do not accept improvement from lessons of

suffering and disappointment." "I have learnt nothing by it," again repeated Caroline. "I think you have; you have learnt that wealth and fashion can, in themselves alone, confer no happiness; and that the only nobility in our land, worth possessing, is derived from talent and virtue."

POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

VITALITY.

THE connection between mind and matter is a subject of so much interest and importance, that we cannot be surprised at the attention which has at all times been paid to it. Hippocrates, the earliest inquirer into medicine and physiology of whom we have any remaining writings, found it necessary, in explaining the functions and operations of the animal frame, to establish a certain vital principle, which he termed *Physis*, and to which he ascribed the superintendence of all the corporeal actions, acknowledging at the same time the separate existence of a mind or soul. This doctrine was founded, no doubt, on the fact that some of the most important functions of the body are altogether independent of the power of the mind, though indispensable to life. The ancient Greek attributed to the *physis*, or principle of vitality, a certain degree of intelligence, which enabled it to direct the operations entrusted to its guidance. It is wonderful how long this theory continued, under various names, to hold its place in physiological science, without any attempt to explain its character or properties. It had "a local habitation and a name," but was neither tangible, visible, nor intelligible. This reproach is in some measure wiped away from modern philosophy, because there is now before the world a theory, which, whether true or not true, at least ascribes the phenomena of life to an agent intelligible to a considerable extent in its nature and operation. This is the great power which, under some of its numerous modifications, appears to pervade all matter and space—the subtle electric fluid.

One of the first persons who pointed out the strong resemblance between some of the phenomena of electricity and the operations of the animal frame, was the illustrious anatomist John Hunter. In his time the knowledge of physiology and anatomy had advanced so far, that the old *physis*, or nature, of Hippocrates, the moving principle of Aristotle, the *anima* or soul of Stahl, &c. were very generally rejected as ridiculous; but at this point the advancement had stopped. When Mr Hunter's theory was brought forward, mankind, cautioned by the failure of all his predecessors, were slow in giving admission to it; and even in the half century which has nearly passed since, it has been gaining credence only by slow degrees, though numerous corroborating facts have been observed from time to time. Before stating the grounds which led Mr Hunter to the proposition of the electric theory of life, it will be necessary to state briefly what the phenomena are which he proposes to explain by its means.

It cannot be said that life is inseparable from, or resides in, any particular modification of form or organisation, for the forms of living bodies are infinite, and in almost all of them, both form and organisation remain unchanged long after the animating principle has left the body possessing them. Neither can it be maintained for a moment that life consists in *sensations* or voluntary motion, because, by disease or by accident, portions of the human body, nay, the whole of it sometimes, has been deprived for a long period of sense and motion, all the involuntary functions which distinguish the sleep of man from death still remaining in vigour. One remarkable instance is on record of a sailor, who, having received a blow on the head in the island of Minorca, was deprived for seven months of all sense and motion, and was restored to the possession of all his faculties by the operation of trepanning, in London. Since vitality, then, is not inseparably dependent on sensation, for this we see may be totally suspended for a long time; since neither is it resident in any particular form of organisation, for living bodies exhibit endless varieties of form; some other characteristic marks must be sought for in drawing the distinction between animated and inanimate matter. The power of appropriating or absorbing quantities of foreign matter as food, and of converting this food into their own proper substance, is the best characteristic both of living animals and vegetables. They have also the property of maintaining a certain temperature; they derive their existence from a parent; they can produce an image of themselves, and they all, after

a period, terminate their being in death. Not one of all these qualities pertains to inorganic bodies; in them we perceive neither growth nor decay, birth, reproduction, nor death. We have thus a strong line drawn between living and inanimate bodies, and the actions which distinguish the former are very correctly termed organic. But though in this term are comprised all the phenomena exhibited in vegetable life, the vital properties of animals are by no means circumscribed within the same limits. Sensation and voluntary motion, or, in other words, the power of feeling, and of moving in accordance with that feeling, are the endowments which elevate the animal as much above the plant, as the latter transcends the stone in the quarry. These actions, peculiar to animal life, are called animal, in contradistinction to the organic; and under one or other of these two classes may be included every vital action performed by living creatures.

Under the head of the organic processes are comprehended the functions of nutrition, respiration, circulation, secretion, and excretion. Of all these, it is evident, the circulation of the blood is in some degree the most important, since all the others may be considered as subservient to it, and its cessation for a time, as in fainting, is a temporary death. The action of the heart, then, on which the motion of the blood depends, is one of the most obvious and most unequivocal characteristics of animal life. Admitting this, we will be less surprised at the importance ascribed to it by some physiologists, who have placed the vital principle in the blood itself; a supposition which has met with the ridicule of other writers. "It is as incorrect," says the late Dr Gordon, "to say that blood enjoys life, as it is to maintain that malt possesses distillation. Blood is the material employed in the process, life the process itself." In the human body, the great importance of the animal processes is very obvious, since through them alone man is connected with external nature; the brain, the material organ of thought, and all the system of nerves, falling under this division. And not only are the animal actions important to us, as the medium through which we are at every instant receiving impressions from the objects around us, for the purpose of supplying the frame with the necessary support and other purposes essential to existence, but they also must be viewed as the sole bond which unites the various parts of the body into one great and harmonious whole. The instant that any one of the senses receives an impression from without, with the rapidity of a lightning-flash the nerve attached to the individual sense communicates with the common centre of perception, and an idea of the external object is at once attained. With the same wonderful celerity is the will of the being conveyed from the centre of volition to the most distant part of the frame, and its commands obeyed. That the brain and nervous system are the important agents in these operations, is doubted by none; but how such a transmission of sensations is effected, has been the subject of endless disputation. If there really is a subtle and invisible agent passing along the course of the nerves, and resident to a certain extent in the system, serving as the universal medium of communication, its importance to life, if it is not the vital energy itself, cannot be questioned. All muscular motion, including the action of the heart and arteries, the sensibility of every organ in the body, and the execution of the mind's commands, are dependent on it. The three principal theories regarding the nature of this nervous energy are the following:—The first assumes the existence of a specific power, altogether unique in its nature, secreted from the blood in the brain, which evolves it, as occasions require, over the whole body. This doctrine was derived, as we have mentioned already, from Hippocrates; but, unfortunately, though venerable for its antiquity, the theory is incapable of the slightest proof, and it would be a mere waste of words to examine it. The second doctrine supposes that the transmission of nervous power is effected by means of the vibrations or oscillations of the particles of the nervous matter itself; while the third ascribes the action of the nerves to the operation of electricity. The former of these has the advantage of not requiring the supposition of any agent; but it is to be doubted if it has any other merit. Its supporters maintain, that, when an impression has been made upon an organ of sense, the effect is continued for some time after the impressing cause is removed, and that it gradually subsides in a way analogous to a vibratory motion. This is, however, a supposition highly inconsistent with our knowledge of the rapid action of the nervous power, and also with the fact that that power can be transmitted, notwithstanding the destruction of a portion of the nerve in action. Many proofs of this have been observed, and must weigh strongly with every inquirer into this theory, because any breach of continuity must certainly put an effectual barrier to the propagation of the vibratory action. The same argument cannot be used against the third doctrine, which holds the ner-

vous energy to depend on electricity, as we know that a slight breach of continuity would not impede the passage of the electric fluid, more particularly when the parts of the body surrounding the divided nerve might act as partial conductors.

The early experiments of Volta and others on the subject of electricity, showed its astonishing effects on the muscles of some animals, and its power in producing actions in them analogous to the phenomena of life. When applied to the human body, its operations were found to be not less wonderful, and suggested without doubt the electric theory of life. It ought, perhaps, to be explained, that controversies have long existed on the subject of the contractile power of the muscles, one party maintaining that it is inherent in the muscular fibre itself, while others believe in its derivation from the nerves. Physiologists in general are now inclined to admit that the intervention of the nervous energy is necessary in all those muscles which are under the power of the will, though it is still doubted whether the involuntary muscles, such as the heart, are dependent on the same stimulus. The probability that they are so, will be explained afterwards. It is through the nerves that the electric fluid has been applied to the muscles of the dead human body; and we shall mention one instance, related by Dr Ure, where the effect produced was fearfully similar to life. The experiment was made on the body of a murderer, who had suffered for his guilt in Glasgow, some years ago. Certain nerves were laid bare, and an instrument of great power was brought to bear on them. At the instant of contact, the corpse started into apparent life, striking a bystander forcibly with one of the arms, as it rose to a sitting position. The face was convulsed in the most terrific manner, surpassing, according to the description, the wildest representations of a Fuseli or a Kean. Some of the gentlemen fainted, others left the room, and all were glad to put an end to the horrible exhibition. The effect produced by the electric fluid on the nerves, and through them on the muscles, of the dead body, may be in some respects compared to the convulsed and contorted appearance often to be observed in persons in whom, from disease or insanity, the balancing power of the mind is unsettled; and, considering the brain as a centre of the nervous energy, the resemblance arises, according to the electrical hypothesis, from the irregular application and action of the power in both cases.

Besides the property, visible on the simplest trial, of exciting muscular contraction, on which all locomotion depends, some celebrated experiments were made upon the digestive apparatus of animals, which go far to prove an equal influence on that part of the animal machine. Before relating these, it may be necessary to state that electricity and galvanism are held in this paper as merely modifications of the same principle; an opinion now very generally received in science, and indeed almost beyond doubt. The galvanic power was employed in the experiments mentioned, which consisted in the division of the nerves on which the action of the stomach has been thought to depend, thus destroying the nervous connection of the latter with the brain. This was done in two animals, to both of which food was subsequently given. The one animal was left to itself, and on examination, after a proper period, the food was found undigested. Through the stomach of the other animal a galvanic current was transmitted, and digestion went on as if the nerves had not been at all injured; proving, with as much certainty as the subject admits of, that digestion, as well as locomotion, may be set in action to some extent by the operation of the electro-galvanic power.

If we find in those wonderful animals, the torpedo, conger, and others, a nervous system unusually large, it must surely go a great way to impress the belief that their electrical power resides in that system. And not only is this the case, but it is well known that their electricity is never exhausted without the nervous system being reduced to a similar state. The number and magnitude of the nerves in these animals, besides being entirely disproportionate to their size, seem necessary neither for their motion, nor for their subsistence, which would lead us to believe that they are intended for the formation, collection, and management of the electric fluid. The structure and textures of their brain and nerves are different in nothing but magnitude from those of animals not endowed with the same surprising powers; and, to heighten the whole analogy, these powers are subject to the will of the creatures which possess them.

"A variety of facts clearly proves the electric fluid to be essentially connected with the human frame; it will dart from long hair when combed in frosty weather; it will inflate a silk stocking when drawn from the leg. In damp and hazy weather, when electricity is carried off from bodies by humidity, our spirits become languid, and our sensibility less acute; the nerves lose their tension and elasticity; and on high mountains spontaneous flashes have darted from the fingers, the body containing more than the surrounding rarified and conducting air; an electric shock has given tone to a flaccid fibre, and restored the languid circulation of a local part to the condition of the rest of the body. Insulated and connected with the conductor, the pulsation is increased, and even the last effort of expiring life is called into action by electricity, when every other stimulant would fail."—Walker's Lectures.

If the brain, the spinal marrow, and the ganglia (knobs situated in certain parts of the body along

the course of the nerves), are considered as central points from, and to, which electrical or nervous sensations proceed, we have an explanation of all the motions and feelings that are under the power of the will, but still the action of the heart, and all the other involuntary motions, remain to be accounted for. Here a portion of the nervous system, long observed and described by anatomists, but little understood, finds a distinct use. This is the great sympathetic branch of the nervous system, from which all the organic actions of the body are supplied in part with their necessary exciting power. The numerous ganglia, or knobs, on the great sympathetic nerve, have been sometimes termed little brains; but their purpose is confessed, by the best physiologists, to be still a matter of conjecture. The utility of such a separate system of nerves for the service of the involuntary functions of the body, is evident, since for them, to a certain extent, a system separate from that affected by the will, is required. Thus, upon this point also, the electric hypothesis of sensation is not devoid of resources or probability. One of the most ardent supporters of the electric, or, as he calls it, the electro-magnetic principle, is Mr Cunningham of the British navy. This gentleman, who is of the medical profession, considers the hair as the principal medium through which electro-magnetism is supplied to the body, when a partial exhaustion has taken place. Among other proofs of the activity of the hair in this respect, he informs us that the superior hairy structure of man gives him a muscular as well as intellectual superiority over woman, whose silkier hair and downy covered skin precludes a sufficiency of electro-magnetism being received or emitted when great intellectual or muscular efforts are demanded. This is but one out of numberless conjectures which this extraordinary writer presents to his readers, and to which it is needless in this place further to advert.

A FEW DAYS AT HAMBURG.

Of all the towns in Germany, Hamburg is perhaps the most agreeable to an Englishman, as he here finds his own language spoken so generally, that he scarcely feels himself in a foreign country. The drivers of hackney-carriages, the boatmen on the Elbe, the waiters at hotels, all have a smattering of English; and even theatrical representations are repeatedly given in our own dear tongue. The sensation is altogether different from that which is felt at entering other strange towns, for the moment you disembark from the London steamer, you are saluted in your own language. No sooner have you gone through the formality, at the floating custom-house on the Elbe, of declaring your name and standing, than you encounter a crowd of porters and coachmen. "A coach, sir?" "Where do you want your luggage carried to, sir?" meet you from a hundred voices.

Depositing yourself in a coach, and carried to the Hotel de Russie, you have still nothing but the vernacular. "Do you wish a sitting-room, or merely a bedroom, sir?" is the question of the Herr Wiedeman, as he receives you, smoking his yard of clay.

How agreeable this is, will be appreciated by those who have travelled much and far, and have been in situations where the ignorance of a barbarous Slavonic dialect was attended with the privation of every necessary convenience.

At the table d'hôte, English divides the conversation with German, and an opportunity is afforded you of enjoying an entertaining meal. The waiters are all attention: "What wine do you take?" says one, handing you a card with the various qualities and prices. "What would you wish to eat?" asks another, holding before your nose a card of the multifarious viands.

The scene at a German table d'hôte is infinitely amusing and cheering. Every one seems disposed to enjoy the fleeting hour. All dull and freezing formality is laid aside, but a propriety of behaviour and gentle courtesy is observed, which is altogether charming. It speaks the character of the country. The calm and sedate German yet knows well how to enhance the pleasures of life, and, without indulgence in excess, promotes hilarity and good-fellowship. A French or Italian table d'hôte is altogether different. There the noise of tongues is quite deafening; nor is that regard to extreme cleanliness, and the outward signs of comfort, so scrupulously attended to, either by the host or the guests. Whatever may be the opinion of French politeness, I do confess the decorum and quiet suavity of the German appears to me equally entitled to admiration. A person always finds in another country some observances which are revolting to him. It is his notions of propriety only that are offended, not, perhaps, propriety itself. Thus we are taught to consider the picking of teeth with a fork as a most unpardonable abomination, yet the Germans do it universally. Are they, therefore, to be set down

as a troop of uncultivated wretches? I once remonstrated with a German with whom I was intimate, on the frightful crime he was committing by picking his teeth with a fork. "You English," said he, "are the strangest people under the sun. You pay attention to the absurd pieces of finical nonsense, and sometimes forget the essence of good breeding. Look at your countryman opposite there: is not his superciliousness of a more insulting nature to the company? Is not the scorn which he expresses for every one around, a crime much more deep against good-breeding than the simple action of putting a fork into one's mouth with nothing upon it?"

Such questions were somewhat difficult to answer; and, upon reflection, I think the German had sense on his side. Every nation has its peculiar foibles, and of course we have ours. An English baronet, a member for a large town, declared in my hearing that the disgraceful conduct of the high sheriff of his county, at whose right hand he sat at a public dinner, had obliged him to leave the table. Now, this disgraceful conduct consisted in eating fish with a knife. Thus, peculiar fancies regulate the notions of refined breeding in every country, and it is at all times best to respect them, and, with as much versatility as possible, to assume the habits, if not the opinions, of the different nations amongst which destiny may throw you.

A summer evening in Hamburg is delightful. The street upon which the Hotel de Russie is situated, the Jungfernstieg (Young Ladies' Walk), runs along the Alster, a broad sheet of water, round the sides of which is a promenade, with trees on each side. Upon this promenade in an evening appears the entire population. Bands of music play at the doors of all the cafés which line the water, and upon the Alster itself are numberless boats filled with the young of both sexes, who keep up a perpetual concert of vocal as well as instrumental music. Sometimes you hear a solitary voice, which you recognise for a female's, the beauty of which has silenced the playful throng. Then again a warlike clang meets the ear, and anon a plaintive melody. The wondrous music of the Der Freyschutz now quickens the pulsation, whilst lofty thoughts are engendered, as the Zauberköte, with its solemn strains, floats along the surface of the water. As you stand upon the bridge over the Alster, having it between you and the town, and contemplate in the twilight the scene before and around you, the mind is struck with its variety and beauty. The water, spreading out before you, is studded with the little boats of vocalists and musicians. On the land, the thickly crowded promenades present the eye with a moving mass scarce distinguishable, whilst the hum of voices breaks upon the ear in the intervals of the music. In the distance, the brilliantly lighted cafés, some of them upon the very water, with their crowded saloons, have a magical appearance, and recal to the mind the gorgeousness of Bagdad or of Cairo in their golden day. The brilliant lights upon the surface of the water throw into gloom the lofty houses of the street, and space is given to the imagination to roam in its wildest range. You may pass in reverie to the glories of faded cities, and create them again in pristine splendour.

How happy are these people! thought I, as I broke from the dream of fancy into which I was rapidly falling. With such music—with such a joyous scene before them, misery can have no tale to tell. I turned my eyes over the opposite parapet of the bridge, and looked upon the Alster, which, after being dammed into a narrow channel over which the bridge is thrown, expands again into a broad sheet of water. Immediately below the bridge, is placed across the stream a barrier with a guard-house, to prevent any ingress into the town after the time of shutting the gates. It sometimes happens that water-parties returning from excursions up the Alster, arrive too late, and must land at this guard-house, leaving their boat to take care of itself. Upon this evening a party of young men were thus intercepted. "Who's there?" cried the sentinel, as the splashing of the oar was heard. "Open the gate," said a voice in English, adding the usual courteous imprecation. "Is it past nine?" asked a German in the boat. "Yes, long past nine," replied the sentinel, standing on the platform of his guard-house. "Take care and don't go near the barrier, for fear of the iron spikes. You must land here." "What's to be done with the boat, then?" "One of you can stay and guard it all night, if you please; at four in the morning the barrier will be opened." "Stay all

"night on the water!" cried they in the boat; "we will force the barrier first." "Force the barrier!" exclaimed the sentinel in a sneering tone; "if you go near it, you'll swamp the boat. Mind I tell you." "What does the ruffian say?" asked the voice in English.

At this moment the sound of a concussion was heard, and immediately after a loud splash. A body had fallen into the water. "I told you so," said the sentinel. "Somebody overboard!" "It's an Englishman," cried they in the boat; "quick! quick! bring a light!"

The sentinel brought a glimmering lamp, opening it, and throwing the light upon the group on the water. It cast a twinkling glare upon the boat, but rendered the gloom around more impenetrable. Here, indeed, was a contrast to what I had just beheld! To turn suddenly from the lively scenes of revelry and joy, to those of death and woe, is subject enough of melancholy. But now my sympathies were roused more nearly. The voice of a countryman to be heard in a foreign land; and, ere its accents were yet hushed, to know that he was in his death-struggle! I would have rushed forward, but all approach was barred. A long circuit was requisite to reach the nearest gate of the town, through which the guard-house was to be gained. I had therefore to watch the scene in silence and in agony.

"What is become of him? do you see nothing of him?" asked they of each other. Fear and terror had seized upon them all.

I shouted in English to the drowning man to give token where he was, but all was silent. Not a movement was heard in the water. He must have sunk instantly, and possibly never rose again. The scene was therefore closed. Nothing more could be done, and the party in the boat reluctantly landed. I also turned away, but still kept walking on the banks of the Alster, which are laid out in beautiful shrubberies to the edge of the water. How changed were then my reflections! Sudden death, how fearful is thy warning! Youth cut off in the moment of forgetfulness, how solemn the lesson! For two hours I paced up and down watching if any thing could yet be seen. But I saw nothing, and in a melancholy mood I took my way to the hotel. I learnt next day that the deceased was the son of the widow of an English officer, who had retired to Hamburg upon her pittance from the government, as a cheap place. Her drowned boy was only twenty, and he had been promised an ensigncy in a couple of months.

To pay the bereaved mother a visit appeared to me an act of necessary duty. I ascertained the place of her abode, and directed my steps thither. She lived in one of those beautiful little houses in the Vorstadt, or suburbs, situated in a small garden. The windows of the house were closed, and gave token of the desolation within. I found the desolate mother sitting in her parlour weeping. I related to her how chance had made me the sad spectator of the catastrophe which she mourned, and offered such services as a stranger might render. "I have need of none," said she. Then rising and bursting into a flood of tears, "Will you see my boy?" she asked, in an agonising tone.

She led me up the stairs into an apartment where the dead body lay. It was already in the coffin, but the lid was not yet nailed down. "They have mangled him severely," said she, as she removed the covering from his face, and pointed to a deep gash down his cheek. "Oh, how beautiful he was!" exclaimed the unfortunate mother—"the image of his poor father. At least I shall know where my son lies," continued she; "my husband fell at New Orleans, and is buried I know not where!" She kissed the clayey lips, and replaced the covering.

"If you are returning to England," said she, "I will give you a small commission to execute; it is the only favour you can render me. I have been so used to misfortune that I do not need consolation." "I am but shortly arrived from England," said I, "and am proceeding into Prussia; but I can forward any letters you may wish, or get any thing done for you." "Oh no," replied she; "a distant relative of mine lives in the town—a merchant; he does every thing of that sort for me I require. And now, sir, whether curiosity or a better motive have led you here, I thank you," added she, somewhat haughtily. "Madam," observed I, "there was little curiosity to gratify: I had merely a wish—" "Well, I know what you are going to say," said she, interrupting me. "Do you know my heart is hardened? I have been an outcast from my father's house, and have endured most of the miseries that can beset this weary pilgrimage. I have told you I need no consolation—I wish no spectator of my griefs. I would be alone," added she, looking at me with a sternness almost ferocious. Petrified with amazement, I bowed and retired. "Lock the door," were the last words I heard her utter, as she gave the order to her servant girl.

The result of the inquiries I made concerning this strange woman was, that she had made a runaway match with her late husband, and had been in consequence forbidden to approach her father by person or by letter. She had followed her husband into the Peninsula, and had endured much misery at Lisbon during the campaigns. The American war broke out, and her husband was one of the victims of New Orleans. She had suffered severe penury for several years, but at last had obtained a small pension from

government, which she had come to Hamburg to enjoy. This last misfortune had, I was subsequently told, bereaved her of her senses, and rendered her mind a perfect wreck. She sank into a morose madness, and her sensibilities were aroused only when, at some lucid interval, the recollection of her son came across her mind. At such times she would weep and call upon his name, until the excess of her feelings again chased away reason, and she relapsed into morose nonentity.

NEW WAY OF EDUCATING YOUNG LADIES.

ONE of the most agreeable privileges we have felt to belong to us, in the management of a periodical work of almost universal circulation, is the power it has conferred of making known to one place the improvements that are taking place in another, with a view to their being extended over the empire. We are desirous, in the present instance, of giving general publicity to a scheme of education for young ladies, which has lately been attempted in Edinburgh, and bids fair to prove, in more respects than one, very highly advantageous.

Hitherto, in the education of young ladies, music and one or two similar accomplishments have borne nearly the same disproportion to other and more necessary studies, which has been borne by classical literature in the education of young men. No one condemns classical literature as a branch of liberal education, nor would any one desire that music were banished from the range of female accomplishments. But a vast proportion of the thinking persons of this realm are disposed to allow that these branches of instruction have been too exclusively and too indiscriminately cultivated. To a great proportion of the sons of persons in the middle walks of life, classical literature is not of nearly so much use as many other studies too often sacrificed to it; it is only, moreover, a few minds which, in early life, really possess an aptitude to acquire it at all. In like manner, it is only a certain, though perhaps larger relative proportion of young ladies, who are fitted to attain any skill in music; while even those who are decidedly apt, must labour for years before they can communicate much pleasure by their performances. Hitherto our views of education for both men and women, but in a more especial degree for the latter, have been miserably limited. "When Lord Chesterfield," says a newspaper writer, with whose sentiments on this point we entirely concur, "called women 'children of a larger growth,' his scorn was misdirected. He should have labelled the other sex, who have curtailed the female mind of its fair proportions, by a frivolous and enervating education. Nature, in bestowing the same faculties on both sexes, clearly indicated that they were to be employed on the same objects. Women require special training for the duties of a mother, and men for those of a profession. Beyond this, it is nature's dictate, that the whole field of intellectual study (with some small and obvious exceptions) should be open to both. Each sex has indeed its peculiar aptitudes; but all the sublime truths of physical science, all the instructive themes of morals and religion, are within the capacity of either. Considered as a source of pure enjoyment, it is unjust and tyrannical to shut out the female sex from scientific pursuits: Two-thirds of the happiness of married life ought to lie in companionship; and does any one doubt that an enlightened man will prefer a companion who can exchange ideas with him on all the most profound and interesting subjects of cogitation, to one whose thoughts are incapable of rising above frivolous gossip? Then, as to the maternal relations, whether will a son reap more improvement from, or feel greater respect for, an intellectual woman, or a mere noticable housewife! The married lady of the Chesterfieldian school certainly occupies no very elevated moral position. She is kept in her lord's house partly as a sort of upper domestic to superintend the *ménage*, partly as a small artist to amuse the guests with indifferent music, and partly as a holiday figure to be covered with finery, and exhibited at the head of the table. Any knowledge beyond the common odds-and-ends of fashionable education, procures for the lady the unenviable distinction of a female pedant, a bore, or a blue stocking! Luckily the manners and prejudices in which these barbarous notions originated, are fast disappearing; and changes are now in progress which will restore women to their proper rank as intellectual beings, and which will at the same time render them better wives, better mothers, more happy in themselves, and more respected."

The scheme of female education which we are desirous of introducing to general notice, was originated in Edinburgh in the autumn of 1834. It is exemplified in two institutions, the elder and original of which is denominated "the Scottish Institution for the Education of Young Ladies," and is conducted after the following plan. A large house, in an elegant part of the city, and connected with some of the beautiful ornamented grounds which we had lately occasion to describe, is set apart for the use of the institution, being placed, with a regard to general management, under the care of a respectable and accomplished lady, who has been accustomed to such a charge. The founders and proprietors of the school are a company of teachers, who have associated for the purpose of carrying it on, and are the sole adventurers in the undertaking. The whole of these teachers are individuals previously in successful professional practice, and whose names, therefore, are in some measure a guarantee for the efficacy of the scheme. The various branches taught are—1, elocution and composition; 2, history and geography; 3, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping; 4, theory of music, and the piano-forte; 5, singing; 6, drawing and perspective; 7, mathematics, astronomy, and mathematical geography; 8, French language and literature; 9, Italian language and literature; 10, German language and literature; 11, dancing and calisthenics. Lectures are also delivered in the course of each season, upon—1, natural philosophy; 2, chemistry; 3, botany; 4, geology and mineralogy; 5, ancient and modern history. For each of these departments there is at least one teacher. A young lady, entering on the 1st of October, and continuing to the close of the session, at the end of July, is considered as an annual pupil, and pays five guineas quarterly; attendance for shorter periods is, we believe, no part of the plan. For this sum the pupil may attend any one or the whole of the teachers and lecturers in the establishment at pleasure. It is perhaps not to be desired that any young person should be instructed in so many branches at once; but, even supposing that she attends but one half, the economy and convenience of the plan are still obvious. The proper time for judging of the success of the institution is not yet, perhaps, arrived. But the teachers, in their first Report, have manifested great anxiety to impress a conviction respecting the adequacy of the pains taken with each individual pupil. The time expended upon each is necessarily less than what is given in private teaching; but while, in the musical department, the Logierian system, to which numbers are indispensable, is adopted, it is expressly stated by the directors, that, in even the most common and familiar branches, such as English, writing, and the languages, the classes are not more numerous than those of many popular teachers in town, "no more being admitted than can be efficiently instructed."

Besides the economy of the plan, it seems to possess at least two other advantages. As the temper and disposition of a pupil do not appear to each master at first in the same light, and as an erroneous opinion may be hastily formed, which a little mutual communication among the masters may remove, the combination of so many teachers under one roof is obviously most advantageous. By attending, moreover, every requisite master upon one spot, much inconvenience and loss of time are spared to the pupil. It is thus also possible for the lady superintendant to mix recreation with study, that no risk of pursuing the latter to a dangerous extent is incurred.

According to a Report published by the directors after a year's experience, "Every endeavour has been made, in the scientific department, to render the various studies interesting and profitable. It has been thought a stretch of enterprise and liberality, in some public schools for young gentlemen, to have lectures on all these subjects delivered by one teacher, and public commendation has been lavishly bestowed on the undertaking; but, in this institution, four subjects were treated individually by lecturers who have long been zealously devoted to their respective branches. In these courses, the extensive apparatus and specimens which belong to these lecturers were made available. The explanations were accompanied by a great variety of experiments and practical illustrations, and, in some of the classes, an examination followed the lecture. In the chemical class, the ladies answered many questions, wrote exercises, and practised, under Dr Reid's superintendence, many useful experiments. In botany, the lectures were illustrated by drawings, and by a great variety of plants; and in geology, specimens were regularly inspected after the lecture. To afford every facility on this and other subjects, a library and museum are already in a state of considerable forwardness. In natural philosophy, the lectures were illustrated by a great variety of experiments, and were also followed by examinations. Connected with the scientific department, the class for mathematics is especially worthy of notice. It was well attended during the session (by about forty ladies); and this branch, hitherto reckoned beyond the range of a lady's education, was, according to the report of Mr Lees, studied with the most complete success."

From the circumstance of the highest branches of education being taught in the Scottish Institution, an idea has gone abroad, that it is chiefly intended for what is called a finishing school, and that great benefit can be derived only by those ladies who are already considerably advanced in their education. That such ladies will derive benefit from their attendance, there is no doubt; but that the institution is chiefly intended

for them, is erroneous. On the contrary, if parents wish their daughters to receive a full and complete course of instruction, and to leave the institution perfectly educated in all the various branches, they are advised to send them when young.

This institution not only recommends those branches which are yet but partially admitted to be desirable for ladies, but by its provisions encourages the study of them. The payment of one fee induces many to attend to subjects which they would otherwise have neglected. Had a separate charge been made for every branch, several classes would have been little attended, and this would probably have been the case with those branches, the introduction of which has been reckoned of so great importance.

Founded on this new and comprehensive plan, the progress of the institution has been watched with much solicitude; and the support which it has received is such as to justify the hope that it will be eminently successful. Though opened only in November 1834, at a period when most pupils had made their engagements for the ensuing season, about one hundred pupils have passed through it this session, many of whom came from distant parts of the kingdom.

Inquiry may naturally be made, whether the system of emulation is to be pursued in the management of the various classes. In the classes for languages, and in the ordinary branches attended by the junior pupils, it is reckoned indispensable. It is also proposed that pupils who have gone through a regular course of instruction, and whose progress shall have been certified by all the teachers and lecturers, shall receive a certificate or diploma from the institution. Monthly reports of the progress and conduct of the pupils will be drawn out by the teachers, and forwarded by the lady superintendent to those parents and guardians who may wish to receive them. And whilst parents are admitted at any time to visit the establishment, they are especially invited to attend during the last week of each quarter, when a recapitulation of the lessons will take place in all the classes, in order to give them an opportunity of judging of the progress of the pupils.

An improvement in national education, then, is evidently introduced by this institution, as it offers an extensive and liberal course of instruction to those whose example and influence in society are universally acknowledged. The education of women does not influence the tastes and opinions of present society alone—it affects those of succeeding generations. According to the system of education hitherto pursued, few females have had opportunities of enlightening their minds on many of the most common appearances of nature; and if a child, in its natural curiosity and eagerness, asks a solution of any little difficulty, he is often discouraged in his research by an unsatisfactory answer. But if the mind of the mother were initiated in the study of those subjects which render the works of the universe around her intelligible, she could point out to her children, not merely their external beauty, but that wise and more hidden arrangement, which expands the flower, and variegates the rainbow, and works in a thousand common objects—and make them, in more than a poetical sense, to find

'Tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.'

Thus would an early habit of reflection be imparted, and the sympathies and associations of youth blended with subjects, of which the rudiments are always acquired with difficulty in later years."

In conclusion, we shall present the account given by the newspaper already quoted, of a visit paid by its enlightened editor to the chemical class: it affords matter for pleasing, and also for serious reflection. "We found forty or fifty young ladies performing chemical experiments at three long tables. Fifty jets of gas, issuing through the tables, served them in lieu of furnaces. Near each jet was a common wine glass, an assortment of broad and narrow slips of window glass, bits of white paper, and, at regular intervals, a few bottles containing acids, alkalies, infusions of vegetable blue, or other chemical substances. The lecture was just concluded, and the experiments had a reference to the subjects discussed in it. The nature of Prussian blue, for instance, and the process for making it, was described in a very few words. Presently each of the pupils placed a small quantity of one substance on a slip of paper, then put another upon it, mixed the two with a glass rod, and the blue was forthcoming. The effects of acids and alkalies upon the vegetable infusion were shown in another experiment: the method of taking casts in plaster of Paris (shillings and half-crowns were employed); the mode of crystallising some salt, whose name we forgot; and various other chemical processes were illustrated by experiments, which were performed by every one of the young ladies present. After each experiment, questions were put by the teacher as to the nature of the substances used, and the change ensuing; and they were answered by the fifty voices simultaneously. This practical chemistry lasted half an hour. The ladies seem to be generally from fifteen to eighteen years of age: some were probably about twelve, and others about twenty. Though young, however, they were neither timorous nor awkward, but went through the manipulations with an alacrity and zest, which showed that there was much of pleasure, and nothing of task-work, in the exercise. The object, of course, is not to qualify ladies for the business of the laboratory, but to give them clearer conceptions of the facts and prin-

ciples of the science, and to fix them better in the memory. The novelty of the thing; the sight of so many happy young females, whose faces were beaming with beauty, health, and vivacity, so employed, gave no small degree of interest to the spectacle. We could not help feeling that it was one of the 'signs' which prognosticate, that the coming age will not be exactly the 'double' of the present."

THE EGGERS OF LABRADOR.

[A third volume of that most delightful work on natural history, the Ornithological Biography of North America, by the indefatigable Audubon, has just appeared. Among a number of interesting papers which it offers for perusal, is the following, on a class of characters never before heard of in this country.]

THE distinctive appellation of Eggers is given to certain persons who follow, principally or exclusively, the avocation of procuring the eggs of wild birds, with the view of disposing of them at some distant port. Their great object is to plunder every nest, whenever they can find it, no matter where, and at whatever risk. They are the pest of the feathered tribes, and their brutal propensity to destroy the poor creatures after they have robbed them, is abundantly gratified whenever an opportunity presents itself.

Much had been said to me respecting these destructive pirates before I visited the coast of Labrador, but I could not entirely credit all their cruelties until I had actually witnessed their proceedings, which were such as to inspire no small degree of horror. But you shall judge for yourself.

See you shallop shyly sailing along;—she sneaks like a thief, wishing as it were to shun the very light of heaven. Under the lee of every rocky isle some one at the tiller steers her course. Were his trade an honest one, he would not think of hiding his back behind the terrific rocks that seem to have been placed there as a resort to the myriads of birds that annually visit this desolate region of the earth, for the purpose of rearing their young, at a distance from all disturbers of their peace. How unlike the open, the bold, the honest mariner, whose face needs no mask, who scorns to skulk under any circumstances! The vessel herself is a shabby thing:—her sails are patched with stolen pieces of better canvass, the owners of which have probably been stranded on some inhospitable coast, and have been plundered, perhaps murdered, by the wretches before us. Look at her again! Her sides are neither painted, nor even pitched; no—they are daubed over, plastered and patched with stripes of seal-skin, laid along the seams. Her deck has never been washed or sanded; her hold—for no cabin has she—though at present empty, sends forth an odour pestilential as that of a charnel-house. The crew, eight in number, lie sleeping at the foot of their tottering mast, regardless of the repairs needed in every part of her rigging. But see! she scuds along, and as I suspect her crew to be bent on the commission of some evil deed, let us follow her to the first harbour.

There rides the filthy thing! The afternoon is half over. Her crew have thrown their boat overboard; they enter and seat themselves, each with a rusty gun. One of them sculls the skiff towards an island for a century past the breeding place of myriads of guillemots, which are now to be laid under contribution. At the approach of the vile thieves, clouds of birds rise from the rock and fill the air around, wheeling and screaming over their enemies. Yet thousands remain in an erect posture, each covering its single egg, the hope of both parents. The reports of several muskets, loaded with heavy shot, are now heard; while several dead and wounded birds fall heavily on the rock or into the water. Instantly all the sitting birds rise and fly off affrighted to their companions above, and hover in dismay over their assassins, who walk forward exultingly, and with their shouts mingling oaths and execrations. Look at them! See how they crush the chick within its shell, how they trample on every egg in their way with their huge and clumsy boots! Onward they go, and when they leave the isle, not an egg that they can find is left entire. The dead birds they collect and carry to their boat. Now they have regained their filthy shallop; they strip the birds by a single jerk of their feathery apparel, while the flesh is yet warm, and throw them on some coals, where in a short time they are broiled. The rum is produced when the guillemots are fit for eating; and after stuffing themselves with this oily fare, and enjoying the pleasure of beastly intoxication, over they tumble on the deck of their crazed craft, where they pass the short hours of night in turbid slumber.

The sun now rises above the snow-clad summit of the eastern mount. "Sweet is the breath of morn" even in this desolate land. The gay hunting erects his white crest, and gives utterance to the joy he feels in the presence of his brooding mate. The willow grouse on the rock crows his challenge aloud. Each floweret, chilled by the night air, expands its pure petals; the gentle breeze shakes from the blades of grass the heavy dewdrops. On the Guillemot Isle the birds have again settled, and now renew their loves. Startled by the light of day, one of the Eggers springs on his feet and rouses his companions, who stare around them for a while, endeavouring to recollect their senses. Mark them, as with clumsy fingers they clear their drowsy eyes! Slowly they rise on their feet. See how the filthy lubbers stretch out their arms and yawn; you shrink back, for verily "that throat might frighten a shark."

But the master, soon recollecting that so many eggs are worth a dollar or a crown, casts his eye towards the rock, marks the day in his memory, and gives orders to depart. The light breeze enables them to reach another harbour a few miles distant, one which, like the last, lies concealed from the ocean by some other rocky isle. Arrived there, they re-act the scene of yesterday, crushing every egg they can find. For a week each night is passed in drunkenness and brawls, until, having reached the last breeding place on the coast, they return, touch at every isle in succession, shoot as many birds as they need, collect the fresh eggs, and lay in a cargo. At every step each ruffian picks up an egg so beautiful that any man with a feeling heart would pause to consider the motive which could induce him to carry it off. But nothing of this sort occurs to the Egger, who gathers and gathers, until he has swept the rock bare. The dollars alone chink in his sordid mind, and he assiduously plies the trade which no man would ply who had the talents and industry to procure subsistence by honourable means.

With a bark nearly half filled with fresh eggs they proceed to the principal rock, that on which they first landed. But what is their surprise when they find others there helping themselves as industriously as they can! In boiling rage they charge their guns, and ply their oars. Landing on the rock, they run up to the Eggers, who, like themselves, are desperadoes. The first question is a discharge of musketry, the answer another. Now, man to man, they fight like tigers. One is carried to his boat with a fractured skull, another limps with a shot in his leg, and a third feels how many of his teeth have been driven through the hole in his cheek. At last, however, the quarrel is settled; the booty is to be equally divided; and now see them all drinking together. Oaths and curses and filthy jokes are all that you hear; but see, stuffed with food, and reeling with drink, down they drop one by one; groans and execrations from the wounded mingle with the snorings of the heavy sleepers. There let the brutes lie.

Again it is dawn, but no one stirs. The sun is high; one by one they open their heavy eyes, stretch their limbs, yawn, and raise themselves from the deck. But see, here comes a goodly company. A hundred honest fishermen, who for months past have fed on salt meat, have felt a desire to procure some eggs. Gallantly their boats advance, impelled by the regular pull of their long oars. Each buoyant bark displays the flag of its nation. No weapons do they bring, nor any thing that can be used as such, save their oars and fists. Cleanly clad in Sunday attire, they arrive at the desired spot, and at once prepare to ascend the rock. The Eggers, now numbering a dozen, all armed with guns and bludgeons, bid defiance to the fishermen. A few angry words pass between the parties. One of the Eggers, still under the influence of drink, pulls his trigger, and an unfortunate sailor is seen to reel in agony. Three loud cheers fill the air. All at once rush on the malefactors; a horrid fight ensues, the result of which is, that every Egger is left on the rock beaten and bruised. Too frequently the fishermen man their boats, row to the shallops, and break every egg in the hold.

The Eggers of Labrador not only rob the birds in this cruel manner, but also the fishermen, whenever they can find an opportunity; and the quarrels they excite are numberless. While we were on the coast, none of our party ever ventured on any of the islands which these wretches call their own, without being well provided with the means of defence. On one occasion, when I was present, we found two Eggers at their work of destruction. I spoke to them respecting my visit, and offered them premiums for rare birds and some of their eggs; but although they made fair promises, not one of the gang ever came near me.

These people gather all the elder down they can find; yet so inconsiderate are they, that they kill every bird that comes in their way. The eggs of gulls, guillemots, and ducks, are searched for with care; and the puffins and some other birds they massacre in vast numbers for the sake of their feathers. So constant and persevering are their depredations, that these species, which, according to the accounts of the few settlers I saw in the country, were exceedingly abundant twenty years ago, have abandoned their ancient breeding places, and removed much farther north in search of peaceful security. Scarcely, in fact, could I procure a young guillemot before the Eggers had left the coast; nor was it until late in July that I succeeded, after the birds had laid three or four eggs each, instead of one, and when nature having been exhausted, and the season nearly spent, thousands of these birds left the country without having accomplished the purpose for which they had visited it. This war of extermination cannot last many years more. The Eggers themselves will be the first to repent the entire disappearance of the myriads of birds that made the coast of Labrador their summer residence; and unless they follow the persecuted tribes to the northward, they must renounce their trade.

A SUFFICIENT REASON FOR DYING.—"Pray, of what did your brother die?" inquired the Marquis Spinola of Sir Horace Vere. "He died, sir," replied he, "of having nothing to do." "Alas, sir," said Spinola, "that is enough to kill any general of us all."

ODDS AND ENDS.

MAGNANIMITY AND GRATITUDE OF A LION.—Prince, a tame lion on board his Majesty's ship *Ariadne*, had a keeper to whom he was much attached; the keeper got drunk one day, and, as the captain never forgave the crime, the keeper was ordered to be flogged; the grating was rigged on the main deck opposite Prince's den, a large barred-up place, the pillars very strong, and cased with iron. When the keeper began to strip, Prince rose gloomily from his couch, and got as near to his friend as possible; on beholding his bare back, he walked hastily round the den; and when he saw the boatswain inflict the first lash, his eyes sparkled with fire, and his sides resounded with the strong and quick beating of his tail; at last, when the blood began to flow from the unfortunate man's back, and the clotted "cats" jerked their gory knots close to the lion's den, his fury became tremendous; he roared with a voice of thunder, shook the strong bars of his prison as if they had been osiers, and, finding his efforts to break loose unavailing, he rolled and shrieked in a manner the most terrific that it is possible to conceive. The captain, fearing he might break loose, ordered the marines to load and present at Prince; this threat redoubled his rage, and at last the captain desired the keeper to be cast off, and go in to his friend. It is impossible to describe the joy evinced by the lion; he licked with care the mangled and bleeding back of the cruelly-treated seaman, caressed him with his paws, which he folded around the keeper as if to defy any one renewing a similar treatment; and it was only after several hours that Prince would allow the keeper to quit his protection and return among those who had so ill-used him.—*Martin's History of the British Colonies.*

GEOLOGICAL CHANGES IN GREAT BRITAIN.—That the face of the globe has successively undergone total changes at different remote epochs, is now a fact beyond all dispute; as also, that, long anterior to the creation of man, this world was inhabited by races of animals, to which no parallels are now to be found; and those animals themselves only made their appearance after the lapse of ages, during which no warm-blooded creatures had an existence. It has been further remarked by zoologists, that the animals which first appeared in these latitudes, were analogous to such as now inhabit tropical regions exclusively; and that it was only at a period immediately before the creation of the human race, that species similar to those of the existing era began to appear in northern latitudes. Similar peculiarities have been also found to mark the vegetation of corresponding periods. It would hardly be credited, by persons unacquainted with the evidence upon which such facts repose, that, in the most dreary and desolate northern regions of the present day, there once flourished groves of tropical plants of Conifere, like the Northfolk Island and Araucarian pines, of bananas, tree ferns, huge cacti, and palms; that the marshes were filled with rush-like plants, fifteen or twenty feet high; the coverts with ferns like the undergrowth of a West Indian island; and the vegetation, thus inconceivably rich and luxuriant, grew amidst an atmosphere that would have been fatal to the animal world. Yet nothing can well be more certain, than that such a description is far from being overcharged.—*Lindley and Hutton's Fossil Flora.*

WEARING STOCKINGS.—Two centuries ago, not one person in a thousand wore stockings; one century ago, not one person in five hundred wore them; now, not one person in a thousand is without them; yet, William Lee, the inventor of the stocking-frame, could get no person to patronise his invention, and he died of a broken heart.

CAUSES FOR THE THRIVING OF TOWNS.—Some towns thrive by being a seat of manufactures, others by being the resort of courtiers, the affluent, and the fashionable; Cologne is equally fortunate from another cause—it exists by its possession of the parings of St Anastasius's beard.

BUILDING A PYRAMID.—The great Pyramid of Egypt, whose base extends over eleven acres, and which rises to a height of 481 feet, required 100,000 men for twenty years to build it; while a steam-engine, with a consumption of only about 700 chaldrons of coal, would have lifted every stone of it into its place.

NATURE OF LABOUR.—Labour is the price which has been paid for all things; money is only the representative of labour; it was not by gold or silver, but by labour, that all the wealth, all the refinements, all the means of comfort in the world, were originally purchased.

SLOW RECEPTION OF IMPROVEMENTS.—On a moderate calculation, twenty years elapse before any improvement in science or art obtains notice in encyclopædias, and at least half a century before they are recognised as established by universities—particularly if they happen to disturb any set system.

COMPARISON OF MAN TO A BOOK.—Man may be compared to a book; his birth is the title-page, his baptism the epistle dedicatory, his childhood the argument or contents, his life and pursuits the subject matter, and his crimes and follies the errata; as for the size and appearance of the work, some volumes are in folio, some in quarto, and some in duodecimo; and while some are plainly bound, others are done ele-

gantly with embellishments; and as in the last page there usually appears the word *finis*, so it is with man; his life also has a terminating point. After fretting his little span, he drops into the grave, which is the earthly finis of his course.

IMPORTATION OF ENGLISH HORSES INTO FRANCE.—Lawrence, in his book on the Horse, mentions that an official French account of the importation of horses into that country, states the annual number of English horses imported to be from fifteen to twenty thousand.

MONUMENTS.—It is by no means a good sign of a country to have a great number of fine public buildings, obelisks, monuments, and statues. The practice of erecting such things seems to have been carried to the greatest length, generally for some bad or some silly purpose. In Egypt, Greece, and Rome, where architectural grandeur was greatest among all the nations of antiquity, the public buildings and monuments were principally indicative of the supremacy of superstition and warlike propensities. Pericles, the Grecian republican statesman, adorned Athens with splendid erections; but while he in this manner pleased the populace, he procured the passing of a law, declaring that no person should be a citizen whose father and mother had not been Athenian citizens, by which 5000 individuals were doomed to be sold as slaves. This infamous act is slurred over by historians, but the ruins of the buildings which Pericles erected serve as themes for sounding his praise throughout all time. It was much the same with Bonaparte. He exhausted the resources of France, but he made up for this by gilding the dome of the Hotel of the Invalids, improving the appearance of the Thuilleries, and erecting a column in the Place Vendôme. The French are essentially a monument-building nation; an obelisk appears to please them under almost any circumstances. The English, on the other hand, are desirous of seeing capital sunk on objects more directly useful; they prefer embellishing and improving their towns with gas lamps, water pipes, common sewers, clean streets, good foot pavements, and having comfortable houses to live in, to the barren spectacle of columns, pillars, and pediments in public places. How ungratifying is the reflection that the fine arts should have been, and are, so often abused, by being made subservient to purposes and tastes obstructive of social and national improvement, or calculated to perpetuate the recollection of transactions originating in the most savage propensities of our nature!

A NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH.—General Putnam, a distinguished soldier in the French and English wars in Canada, about the middle of last century, was on one occasion on the point of suffering a horrible death at the hands of the Indians, who had made him prisoner. The savages tied him to a tree in order to burn him alive, and had already set fire to a circle of combustibles around him, when he was rescued by the interposition of their leader, Molong, a famous French partisan officer, and sent in safety to Montreal. Putnam afterwards served in the cause of the Americans in the war of the revolution, and lived to see his country—for he was American born—enjoying the independence of which he had been so able a champion.

WEST INDIAN FOUR O'CLOCK.—One of the most remarkable flowering plants in Jamaica is the *Jalapa mirabilis*, called the four o'clock flower, or the West Indian four o'clock. It has obtained this popular name from keeping its petals closed during the hottest hours of the day, and only opening them in the afternoon, when the air is cool.

A FINE SAYING.—The following is a fine saying of Madden, in his book on the West Indies: "Human nature is pretty much the same in all countries; and, as far as my experience goes, in the various parts of the globe, complexion has as little to do with its yearnings, its failings, or its finest traits, as climate or creed."

SHADING THE EYES.—Some people cover their eyes with green or other shades when any thing is the matter with them. This is wrong. It is now ascertained by the best oculists that shades injure the sight instead of strengthening it, and that from these creating heat and inflammation in the parts affected. If the eye be injured, and light insupportable, the best way is to tie a cool linen handkerchief over it. We have heard it stated as a curious fact, that when the English army returned from Egypt, those soldiers were least affected with ophthalmia—a disease in the eyes—who had worn no snouts to their hats. The eyes evidently require to be played upon by a free circulation of air, and therefore broad-brimmed hats may be said to be any thing but protectors to the organs of vision, for the heat radiates from the ground more than from the sun overhead. It is worthy of notice, that none of the natives of hot climates wear head coverings with snouts or brims; and we should think that they were good judges in these matters.

A DOCTOR'S ADVICE TO A PATIENT.—A man of property (says an American author) who had for years been abusing his stomach, at last found his health in a rapid decline. Nature could endure it no longer. He went to consult the celebrated Dr Spring of Wattertown, Massachusetts. He stated the symptoms of his case so clearly, that the learned physician could not mistake the nature of the disease. "I can cure you, sir," said he, "if you will follow my advice." The patient promised most implicitly to do so. "Now," says the doctor, "you must steal a horse." "What!

steal a horse!" "Yes—you must steal a horse. You will then be arrested, convicted, and placed in a situation where your diet and regimen will be such, that in a short time your health will be perfectly restored."

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SCHOOLMASTERS.—Not long ago, an advertisement appeared in a newspaper, for a gentleman to undertake to teach the classical languages, writing, and arithmetic, for which a salary of thirty pounds would be allowed! In the same paper there was an advertisement for a footman, the wages not to exceed thirty pounds, with a livery!

SINGULAR INSTANCE OF CANINE SAGACITY.—The following case of canine sagacity was lately mentioned in the Greenock Intelligencer newspaper:—"In the course of last summer, it chanced that the sheep on the farm of a friend of ours, on the water of Stinchar, were, like those of his neighbours, partially affected with that common disease, maggots in the skin, to cure which distemper it is necessary to cut off the wool over the part affected, and apply a small quantity of tobacco juice, or some other liquid. For this purpose, the shepherd set off to the hill one morning, accompanied by his faithful canine assistant, Ladie. Arrived among the flock, the shepherd pointed out a diseased animal; and making the accustomed signal for the dog to capture it, 'poor Mailie' was speedily sprawling on her back, and gently held down by the dog till the arrival of her keeper, who proceeded to clip off a portion of her wool, and apply the healing balsam. During the operation, Ladie continued to gaze on the operator with close attention, and the sheep having been released, he was directed to capture in succession other two or three of the flock, which underwent similar treatment. The sagacious animal had now become initiated into the mysteries of his master's vocation, for off he set unbidden through the flock, and picked out with unerring precision those sheep which were affected with maggots in their skin, and held them down until the arrival of his master, who was thus, by the extraordinary instinct of Ladie, saved a world of trouble, and the operation of clipping and smearing most materially facilitated. Strange as this notice may appear, it is perfectly true; and should any of our sheep-breeding readers be desirous to obtain a colley of Ladie's noble line, we will, if desired, cheerfully direct him to the hospitable abode of Ladie's owner, which is within a Sabbath day's journey of Ard Stinchar."

AN INCURABLE DISEASE.—A gentleman one day walking along the streets of a crowded city, had his attention attracted to a beggar, who besought his compassion, and whose whole aspect betokened misery and want. The gentleman's heart was touched. He paused, and after bestowing an alms, inquired, with sympathising speech, what was the cause of the beggar's misfortunes, and if he laboured under any complaint. "Yes," replied the party addressed, "I have for years laboured under a disease which I fear will at last carry me to my grave." "Pray, what disease may it be?" said the gentleman. "Ah, sir, it is of so dreadful a nature that I cannot show it to you on the public street; but if you will be so good as step aside, I will exhibit it, provided you promise not to speak of it to any one." "Agreed," replied the gentleman, and forthwith both adjourned into a private corner. "Now," said the beggar, opening his clothes, "do you behold the disease which is preying upon me?" "No, I can see nothing—you are only shamming illness." "Alas, sir," answered the beggar, "you are short-sighted; do not you perceive that the disease which afflicts me, and is eating into my vitals, is *laziness*?—it is a disease which has grown upon me from my birth, and is now altogether beyond the possibility of cure."

WRITTEN IN THE SAND ON THE BEACH
AT CUMBRAES, 1814.

Next when ocean's rising wave
O'er these sands shall curling lave,
It will, unconscious, sweep away
All we have writ in idle play;
Then ebbing, leave a lovely plain
For merry hands to mar again!
Oh would that time's all-sweeping tide
O'er our past sorrows thus could glide,
Softly leave the harrowed mind,
And leave no rugged trace behind.
But no!—The lines by sorrow trac'd
Are not thus easily effac'd!
More like the letters on the rock,
They time and tide alike can mock;
While those impress'd by joy's bright hand,
Are like the letters in the sand!

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